Indict Ferrie's '63 Roommate

S-1-4/5/67

The Orleans Parish Grand Jury today indicted Layton Patrick Martens for perjury in connection with the investigation of the murder of President John F. Kennedy.

Martens, of 3622 Constance, was a roommate of David William Ferrie at the time the President was slain in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, and was arrested with Ferrie two days later.

Martens was indicted in connection with testimony he gave the grand jury a week ago relating to Gordon Novel, the witness sought by Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison in his probe of the assassination.

The jury indicted Martens shortly after 1:30 p. m. A warrant was issued for his arrest, and a bond of $2,500 was set by Criminal District Judge Bernard J. Bagert.

Also today, two newsmen and another new witness were called before the jury. The third witness, Rancier Blaise Ehlinger, 28, of 103 Homestead, Metairie, said he knows Novel.

Police records revealed that Ehlinger was arrested June 12, 1959, by New Orleans police as a fugitive from Baton Rouge on an auto theft charge. Novel was arrested here the same day, also as a fugitive from Baton Rouge on an auto theft charge.

Ehlinger testified voluntarily before the grand jury today. He was not subpenaed.

THE TWO NEWSMEN subpenaed were Richard Townley of WDSU-TV and Bill Elder of WWL-TV. Both had been involved in covering the Kennedy probe in recent weeks, but there was no explanation of why they were called.

The Martens indictment charged that he appeared March 29 as a witness and testified as follows under questioning by Garrison:

Q—How aften—how well do you know Gordon Novel?

A—I don't recall ever hearing of or meeting Gordon Novel.

Q—Are you telling me that even when the boxes were being removed from the bunker you did not know the purpose of the trip?

A—No, as best I can remember, I was there. Yes, I do remember being there. The purpose of the trip was not revealed to me.

Q—You do not remember Sergio Arcacha Smith being on the trip?

A—No, I don't.

The grand jury charged this testimony was perjurous. There was no explanation of what particular statement the jury claims is false.

Neither was there any explanation of the trip, boxes and bunker referred to.

Arcacha and Novel have been accused in a warrant burglarizing a munitions plant in Houma in 1961.

After Ehlinger appeared before the jury, Steve Plotkin,

See JURY— Page 9

—States-Item Photo.
RANNY EHLINGER
Grand Jury witness

Jury--

Continued from Front Page

Novel's attorney, said Ehlinger has known Novel for 12 years, both socially and professionally.

Plotkin said both Ehlinger and Novel were in the electronics business at one time and in another business he could not recall.

He declined to name the electronics firm.

Plotkin said he is representing four clients involved in the Garrison probe, and sees no conflict of interest. They are Novel, Ehlinger, Jack Martin and David Lewis.

PLOKTIN SAID Ehlinger is unemployed.

Jerry Weiner, attorney for Novel in Columbus, Ohio, where he is under bond awaiting extradition proceedings as a fugitive from New Orleans, came here today to confer with Plotkin.

He brought with him a private investigator, Stan Greenbaum.

Ferrie, a key figure in the Garrison probe, roomed with Martens at 3330 Louisiana ave. pkwy., where Ferrie was found dead Feb. 22. This is also the apartment where Garrison alleges the plot to kill the President was laid in September, 1963.

MARTIN IS a private investigator who has conferred with Garrison on the probe. Lewis is a bus clerk who claims to have information on the assassination.

Ehlinger was before the jury for 30 minutes today, from 11:30 a.m. to 11:50.

—States-Item Photo.
GORDON NOVEL

Ehlinger, a good-looking young man dressed in an olive green suit and black tie, would not say what his connection with the case was beyond the fact that he had known Novel for some time.